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Outsourcing Biomaterials Management – Preservation in a Downturn

A Commentary

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Centralized maintenance
and control supports
ownership and
ensures compliance.

Biomaterials represent intellectual property. Intellectual property provides the basis for investors to place their resources at risk and is an integral part of value creation. Preservation is therefore paramount as it later becomes powerful for competition, stability, and mitigation of risks on investments.

A biostorage service provider supports an organization's effort to assure and manage intellectual property, control the costs of storage, locate and retrieve information and materials, and dispose of materials at the end of their business or research life.

The argument for outsourcing becomes even more convincing when economic conditions lead to a crisis within the organization; the result of which is radical change. Often the crisis serves as a wake-up call to implement new tactical and strategic solutions and sharpens focus on asset preservation and assurance for the future.

For the vast majority of companies, biomaterials management is not a core competency under the best of circumstances. And when pressure mounts due to an economic downturn, the potential for ignoring responsible management practices increases, and the responsibility for long-term, archive-level management is even more crucial.

Outsourcing Biomaterials Management –
Preservation in a Downturn *(continued)*

Biological sample repositories and databases are critical assets. Centralized biostorage helps to assure there is no disagreement regarding ownership and associated intellectual property rights.

A centralized repository makes certain that the samples are maintained for corporate purposes only.



Standardized, well-documented, centralized systems and standard operating procedures (SOPs) as well as comprehensive inventory management and knowledge management strategies are critical. The simple case of staff turnover can jeopardize sample integrity and value through loss of “knowledge” that occurs when employees leave an organization. Additionally, without these systems in place, organizations operate without fully knowing how many samples are stored and where they are. Standardized processes and procedures ensure uniform application of best practices and successful knowledge transfer.

To ensure that a crisis which affects an organization does not also negatively affect long-term opportunity, a reliable storage alternative is essential. Since it may be months or years before samples are needed for future decisions, research, testing, or audits, samples must be maintained in highly-specialized and consistent conditions. It is not sufficient to simply have freezers. When a company experiences crisis, many factors must be considered to maintain sample integrity. These include:

- Secure, modern and scalable facilities strategically located to reduce environmental risks and other external threats
- Advanced and scalable storage and inventory management technologies and systems
- Reliable, state-of-the-art storage and temperature-monitoring equipment
- Expert, highly trained staff with emergency response capabilities
- Thorough, consistently applied standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- Regulatory compliant processes, systems, and technologies

As we weather tough times ahead, it is reassuring to know that a responsible option exists for effective management and business continuity.